



Connecticut's Beardsley Zoo
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March 2, 2015

State Financial Support for Connecticut's Beardsley Zoo

Dear Appropriations Committee,

I write to you as Director of Connecticut's Beardsley Zoo in Bridgeport.

Through this position for the past 30 years, I have had an opportunity to see the impact of the Beardsley Zoo on the community. It serves a great tourist draw, serving over 275 thousand visitors per year. A key mission of the Zoo is to assist schools and students throughout the region, and we educated more than 60 thousand students at the Zoo, at schools, and in the community. Moreover, the Zoo has 40 employees on its payroll, but we depend on the help of the City of Bridgeport to supply additional help.

The Beardsley Zoo has always relied on the financial support of the State of Connecticut. The money we receive passes through to the City of Bridgeport to reimburse for the use of their employees and the hands-on assistance they provide. A threat to this funding is a threat against our ability to provide this vital function to the state.

Five years ago, the funding totaled \$400 thousand last year, it was \$325 thousand. Even as we pursue new revenue streams, donors, and grants we are struggling to maintain our services to the community.

I need your help. I need you to actively and aggressively support Connecticut's Beardsley Zoo.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns. I would be honored to meet you at the Zoo and to arrange for a guided tour for you and your family.

Respectfully,

Director

Connecticut's Beardsley Zoo

Ps: Support that the State has given over the past many years to attractions through tourism funding has allowed those institutions to continue their good work educating and attracting guests to our fair state. I would be remiss in not advocating for support to continue also for those facilities.

An accredited member of the American Zoo and Aquarium Association.

Connecticut's Beardsley Zoo is owned and operated by the Connecticut Zoological Society, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to conservation, education and recreation.

